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SUBJECT: P5 MEETING WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL ON IRAN

(U) Classified by USUN Minister-Counselor William J. Brencick for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Ambassador Sanders and Pol MinCouns and the other P5 Ambassadors met with the SYG and former Chief of Staff and new Deputy SYG Designate Malloch Brown early in the evening of March 3. SYG called the meeting to offer a briefing on his meetings with former Iranian President Khatami in Doha. SYG offered this readout with the observation that he hoped it could contribute to the Council's discussion of Iran. Annan reported that Khatami complained that Iran's intentions and policies toward nuclear issues and more generally had not changed (although he admitted some of the controversial public statements of the new President obscured this fact). However, according to Khatami the attitude of the outside world had hardened. Iran had a right to develop nuclear technology under the NPT, but the Europeans were seeking to impose new conditions that would force Iran to forego these rights, going beyond the guarantees that had been negotiated. Iran had accepted an EU deal to fully implement the Additional Protocol, to put a 3.5% limit on enrichment, and to offer full cooperation to the IAEA. Now, following Iranian elections, this was not enough. Khatami told the SYG that if the EU was willing to allow research on enrichment and a "pilot program," Iran would sign on to this agreement.

¶2. (C) Khatami insisted that referring this matter to the UNSC was not in Iran or anyone else's interest. Iranian public opinion was firm in demanding development of nuclear technology. Western countries offered nuclear fuel but no technological know-how, the very thing that Iranians demanded. All of Iran's enrichment activities would be carried on under close IAEA supervision. SYG commented that Khatami was one of Iran's "moderate voices" and might be worth listening to at least to compare his message with that of other sources. Khatami insisted that the SYG had a role to play in helping to overcome the current impasse, although Annan presented this claim neutrally and said he did not encourage him on this point.

¶3. (C) UK's Jones Parry gave a forceful presentation emphasizing that to say Iran's intentions had not changed was quite worrisome in itself, given their history of persistent deception and clandestine nuclear activity, and that Iran has gone back on its assurances. Carrying on "research" was not a minor point or a trivial concession -- a fully developed "pilot program" could jump into industrial production and making highly enriched uranium very quickly. Any such activity was flatly unacceptable for the capability it potentially offered Iran in weapons production. Jones Parry reported that the Larajani meetings with the EU3 in Vienna earlier in the day had been "constructive" but indicated no "move on substance" nor willingness on Iran's part to agree to the February BOG's demand that all enrichment activity again be suspended in order to begin to restore confidence in

Iran's intentions, even though this was not a permanent ban. Meanwhile, Iran is clearly buying time. At March 6 BOG, the decision will be how to respond, but time is clearly running out.

14. (C) SYG asked if Iran was still in touch with the Russians and if there was a chance of progress before the March 6 BOG. Ambassador Denisov simply referred to Lavrov's statement earlier today to the effect that the Russian offer of a joint venture for uranium enrichment remained on the table as did, he quickly added, a demand for a full moratorium of all enrichment activities in Iran. There may still be time, but there was no agreement as yet. Chinese Ambassador Wang then reported on his Deputy Foreign Minister's visit to Tehran, where he delivered the clear message that Iran had lost and needed to restore the confidence of the international community -- the only means to do this at present was to reinstitute the moratorium on enrichment. Time was indeed limited but a diplomatic solution was still "hoped for" by the Chinese. French PermRep de la Sabliere simply added that Iran said nothing new to the EU3 in Vienna today. He noted that the SYG should take note of the unity of the P5 in making basic demands of the Iranians. As for the argument that the Iranians had boxed themselves into a corner, de la Sabliere was dismissive. Iran had insisted once before that they could not suspend enrichment and then agreed to do so -- they would simply have to reverse themselves again. Ambassador Sanders, noting that the U.S. was the only party in the room not talking to the Iranians, thanked the others for their readouts.

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